

i live in a hologram with you

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i live in a hologram with you

by [wurmhole](#)

Summary

If by some weird as s--t luck me and V survive and escape, we will move to some island somewhere or maybe Mexico, New Zealand or some exotic place where Americans cant get us. If there isn't such a place, then we will hijack a hell of a lot of bombs and crash a plane into NYC with us inside, iring away as we go down (...)

Snapshots of Eric and Dylan's life on the run.

Notes

If I have to look at this for even a second longer I will gouge my eyes out. enjoy

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

If you asked Dylan how it all played out, he couldn't tell you.

One moment it was pure adrenaline, gunshots and fire alarms and police sirens - and the next it was someone (was it Eric? was it him?) screaming over the deafening sounds, some decision being made - and then Eric, speeding down the highway, fresh blood smeared all over his face, the only clear image he has, the only thing he remembers.

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Later, much later, Eric finally stops. He kills the engine but keeps his hands on the steering wheel. They're shaking.

Wide-eyed and terrified, the two stare at each other for what feels like hours. Neither of them speaks.

But that's just the beginning.

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It shouldn't be this easy to fall into a routine. It feels wrong, immoral - to take a step beyond the carnage, to continue the story from where it was supposed to end. To act as if they're still human when both know that couldn't be farther from the truth.

Sometimes, April feels like a dream. A hyperrealistic nightmare that leaves one soaked in sweat, an aborted cry still on their lips - but then it's the little things that count.

Like the neverending stream of headlines. Like their faces plastered all over TV. Brutal reminders of what they've done.

It's instinct, Eric says, this will to survive. It's human nature stripped bare.

There's a tremor in his voice. Dylan wonders if that's human nature, too.

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Soon enough it's all a blur of motels and gas stations and abandoned parking lots.

Neither believes for a second that a life lived out of a shitty getaway car, a life spent hopping from state to state until they've seen every single one of those, a life sustained on sporadic odd jobs and petty thievery could ever work in the long run - but there's no long run, never has been.

So it's until the end of summer. Until the money runs out. Until somebody finally sees through them and everything ends the way it was supposed to end.

Sometime mid-June, swayed by a particularly strong bout of all-encompassing fatalism, they drop a significant chunk of their savings on a slightly-nicer-than-usual room in some backwater midwestern town. The clerk doesn't spare a glance at either of their faces as she throws the keys in Eric's general direction, which is a small blessing.

The rest of the evening is spent in front of a grainy television, side by side, shoulder to shoulder. There's some kind of mediocre late night action flick, a bottle being passed back and forth, dim lighting and warm summer air and the smell of Marlboro menthols.

Eric has his eyes closed, off to some distant place from the past. Dylan can guess where that is.

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Most nights are spent in the car. Drifting off side by side, or back to back, a noble attempt to be mindful of the little personal space they can give the other - and then waking up tangled in something not unlike an embrace.

It's the lack of space. It's the biting mountain cold. It's something neither of them will talk about in their waking hours, anyway.

In his dreams, Dylan wanders neverending corridors, post-apocalyptic remnants left of strip malls, bowling alleys, fast food chains, glorious suburban decay. Other times, it's explosions, it's burning buildings and piles of rubble and charred flesh, hellfire, eternal damnation.

Neither scares him. Every night, every dream, it feels like there's someone by his side.

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Dylan sinks to the bottom of the pool, dives as deep as the air in his lungs allows him.

It's different down there, in the dark. All the long lost memories, all the long forgotten fantasies, floating to the surface. Bursts of color superimposed onto violence.

He considers staying a bit longer, holding his breath until everything is hazy and the only pain that remains is physical, until the world fades at the edges and then dissolves completely - but then he hears a voice. It's distorted, distant, though Dylan would recognize its owner anywhere, would recognize him in his sleep, at the bottom of the ocean.

He comes up for air.

And sure enough, there's Eric - sitting on the edge, beer in hand, stare relaxed, unguarded, so unlike the usual hostile glares he flashes anyone who dares to look him in the eye.

"Found some treasure yet, V?", he quips, smiling fondly.

Dylan smiles back, tries to keep it casual. *No, not really.* There's nothing to be found going under.

He pushes himself up, flops down next to Eric, then snatches the beer from his hand and drinks the remaining liquid in one go. Eric pretends to be offended, gives him a theatrically exasperated look - and keeps it up for exactly two seconds before breaking into a laugh.

No one can see them from here. There's the empty dilapidated inn, casting its shadow over their murky little paradise, but the windows are all dark, covered, not a tenant in sight.

Earlier it was Eric egging him on, a freshly abandoned site just off the highway too good an opportunity to pass on, just like high school, he said, that familiar glint of mischief in his eyes - and bastard knew Dylan was sold. He didn't even have to pitch the idea. Breaking into a million dollar property, breaking into some poor fucker's company van - it's all the same, really. A couple of teenagers on a mission, a couple of teenagers on a run from the law.

"You ever miss it?", Eric asks, as if he's been reading Dylan's mind all this time.

And Dylan does miss it.

"We were miserable", he answers instead.

Eric snorts. "Like we're oh-so-happy now. Can't even afford good beer". He reaches for the last can and hands it to Dylan. "Bottoms up. I think I'm gonna hurl."

Dylan doesn't need to be told twice. It's not until he's about halfway done that he speaks again.

"You know, I thought it would be easy."

"Well. Funny how that turned out." Eric licks his lips, hesitant. "It felt like a movie though, didn't it? Dangling that shit right under their noses." A pause. "It's so fucking weird that we even met."

"What, you think we shouldn't have?" Dylan asks. It was supposed to be a light-hearted jab, but it feels all self-conscious and weird.

Eric shrugs. He goes quiet, doesn't answer, turns his face upwards - towards the sky.

Dylan thinks back to the long hours spent in the darkness, Eric's car parked on the side of some deserted road, just the two of them and their music and no one else in sight. To the rebel missions, to the makeshift firework show on the 4th of July, to that one sweltering mid-August night when they drove miles and miles out of town to see meteors fall against clear sky.

To Eric's gaze, fixed on some distant point neither of them can actually see. And then, to Eric sensing Dylan staring at him, and staring right back, once more in the land of the living. A familiar scene, relived, replayed like a theatre rehearsal.

Eric smiles, short and sweet - and Dylan knows it's as much of an answer as he's ever going to get.

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They keep drinking until neither can sit upright. One six pack and a thousand bad jokes later Eric lays down, head spinning, stretching his skinny limbs out across the grimy tiles.

Dylan follows.

He meets Eric halfway, and their fingers touch.

Everything feels slightly unreal. Like some kind of elaborate dreamscape where none of this actually means anything. Like they're the only people in this realm.

That's what Dylan tells himself when he closes the gap and captures Eric's lips in his own.

Neither of them moves, at first. Eric doesn't recoil in disgust, though, doesn't push Dylan away, and- it's something. It's a start.

Dylan shifts a little, opens his mouth a bit, tries to adjust the angle so that it's less awkward and more like something he'd envisioned doing with a girl, lifetimes ago, back when he could envision any sort of future at all - and with that, Eric finally moves, and suddenly it's everything at once.

Eric's lips and Eric's hands and Eric's body all pressed up against Dylan's because Eric goes about this just like he goes about anything else, jumps in headfirst, all-or-nothing, lingering fear dissolved in alcohol and adrenaline. It's too fast and erratic and the angle is still off - but none of that matters with Dylan's brain blanking on every touch, every sound Eric makes, every look at Eric's flushed face that he steals whenever they come apart for air.

Dylan tries to speak, get Eric to slow down, talk this through, but then the other boy moves so that he's straddling Dylan's hips, grabs Dylan by the shoulders and holds him in place, and every single coherent thought leaves his brain in a matter of seconds.

There's a minute or two where Eric simply *looks*, a stare so intense it makes Dylan's stomach flip, dark, demanding - and then he reaches for Dylan's wrists, pins them to the ground and presses them into the cold tiles almost to the point of pain.

Dylan lets him, but keeps his gaze daring, defiant, as if to spur Eric on, *so what are you gonna do now, huh*, and for a moment Eric looks up for the challenge. He takes one hand off Dylan's wrist and drags it across his chest, down, *down*, just shy of the waistband of his boxers which leave no doubt as to how fucking *hard* the blonde is - but then he loses his nerve and pulls away and moves back and suddenly it's obvious that despite his uncharacteristic confidence just moments earlier, he has no idea what he's doing.

There's Eric Harris the murderer, Eric Harris the monster, the collective nightmare of white American suburbia, personified - and then there's this.

God, he looks so young.

Just as Eric is about to untangle himself entirely, apologize and skitter away, Dylan grabs him by the wrist, firmly, the way the other boy had done mere moments ago. They glance at each other in some split second agreement, some kind of non-verbal act of reassurance - and then they're all over each other again, Dylan sliding into the water and pulling Eric forward so that he's standing and Eric's sitting on the edge, legs on either side of his waist.

Dylan doesn't know whether it was Eric's show of vulnerability or simply the alcohol that got him feeling this bold and giddy and careless, but with the rational part of his brain almost completely turned off he doesn't overthink it, doesn't second-guess himself like he always would, just winds his arms around Eric's neck and pulls him in for another kiss.

It's so much more intimate that way. Eric draws a sharp breath when he feels a warm hand come up to rest on his hip, not pushy, not forceful, but unmistakably there. An offering.

It takes them a while to find some kind of steady rhythm, but just like everything else, they make it work. Soon enough they're moving against each other like it's always been the most natural thing in the world, like it's something that was bound to happen. Fated.

Dylan's in the middle of receiving a hickey somewhere in the vicinity of his collarbone when he sees a pair of headlights in the periphery of his vision, then hears some kind of vague noise in the distance, and they jolt apart on pure instinct, suddenly all too rooted in reality. Eric's still out of breath, still all disheveled and wide eyed - but he's also prepared to make a run for his life as he stands.

There's a minute or two where they wait in total stillness, petrified, but then they're pretty sure whoever that was is gone. Even so, Dylan's afraid to look at Eric, afraid that he'll realize the true meaning of what they've done, of what they could have done, fully expecting him to freak out or do something drastic.

He swallows, but dares to pick up his head. And Eric's still right where he left him, dazed, bewildered - but not angry, not in the slightest.

"The fuck you looking at?" he slurs, playful, and then shoves Dylan by the shoulders so that the taller boy stumbles backwards, all long uncoordinated limbs.

Caught off guard, Dylan falls into the water with a loud splash, but he doesn't fight it, doesn't do anything - just sinks, inch by inch, reaching towards the deepest part once more.

His eyes are open, but he sees no war, no violence this time. It's just dark.

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They kiss once more in the dimly lit, deserted hallway.

Eric has Dylan up against the wall, both hands tangled in his hair. He brings the taller boy down to his height, pulls him into his orbit, pushes his tongue into Dylan's mouth in a way that Dylan would find gross if it wasn't *Eric*, Eric stripped down to the barest of bones.

In the brief moments they come up for air, Eric sneaks little glances at Dylan - a bit sobered up, scared that this is all some grand misunderstanding, that he is about to be pushed away and punched square across the face and called a fag, which he could take, or worse, get abandoned right where he stands, which he couldn't.

Not bothering to stop kissing him breathless, Dylan takes Eric's hand, laces their fingers together and squeezes in what he hopes is a reassuring gesture. Eric doesn't say anything, doesn't seem to notice, but he pulls Dylan just that much closer.

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Later that night, Eric rests his head on Dylan's chest and spins fantasies about all the ways they can still get out of this mess, about running and running and never looking back until it's just the two of them at the end of time.

There's an edge to his voice, something in the way he feverishly stumbles over his words, something in the way his fantasies keep devolving into visions of blood and gore and guts and violence, that makes him sound fucking insane.

Dylan doesn't think about that, though. Doesn't think about anything, really. He simply lays there, absent-mindedly strokes the other boy's hair, his head devoid of thoughts in a way it's never been, not since April, not since the long, long months before it.

The sun comes up over the middle of nowhere, Oklahoma. For the first time, Dylan doesn't regret allowing himself to live and see it.

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The routine is different after that - but it's surprisingly easy, too.

They don't talk about it, don't try to find a name for whatever it is between them, don't communicate their needs or discuss their boundaries or do any of the shit a regular, mature couple might do. There's no need for any of that, Dylan figures. They're way past humanity. And they're bound for life.

Sometimes, he thinks it's a sin. Not just the physicality - the small gestures of everyday affection, the way they grab for each other in the dark, or the stolen moments between long stretches of road - it's the way it all feels.

Dylan wonders if all of his transgressions are bound to culminate in him getting struck down by the wrath of a god he had long stopped believing in. He still fantasizes about helping him out, still dreams of blowing his brains to bits as often as he dreams just about anything else - but then he imagines Eric's hand, seeking out his own in the way he always does before falling asleep, thinks of Eric's hand coming up with nothing, grasping at air - and suddenly, he finds himself more willing to fight that hypothetical god rather than submit to his will.

But the strike comes anyway.

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Dylan listens to Eric making small talk with the gas station attendant as he pockets a pack of Marlboro menthols. It's a familiar tactic, tried and true. Foolproof, too, as long as the town is enough of a shithole.

Eric looks tempted to tell Dylan to just *curb your fucking nicotine addiction, dude* every time he suggests it - but Eric's significantly less eager to fly off the handle these days, so he lets it slide. He's been letting Dylan get away with a lot of things, lately.

Eric's still at the register when Dylan reemerges at the front. He turns around and gives Dylan a flash-of-the-moment smile, private, sweet and affectionate, reserved for him alone.

And Dylan, well, he finds it hard to think whenever Eric looks at him like that. Everything else momentarily fades out, turns into background noise, meaningless nonsense to be filtered out as soon as it enters his line of sight.

He will recount that moment later, mortified. He will keep replaying it in third person, the image of himself sticking out like a sore thumb between the aisles, with no way to shrink and no way to hide and no awareness that he really should be doing either, the clerk zeroing in on his lanky form with a vague look of recognition, and then the dreaded question-

“You live round here, son? ‘Cause I swear I’ve seen you around.”

It’s enough to make Dylan’s blood run cold.

The woman keeps scanning his face, still only halfway down the road that leads to the inevitable, and Dylan knows they need to get the fuck away and run and run and never look back and pray that she’s too slow to get all of the key details down right - but he’s paralyzed, frozen in place as his brain cycles through variations of *God, we were so dumb to think this could go on forever and fuck, this is it, then.*

The cashier’s expression morphs from vague recognition to horrifying realization as she reaches for the emergency line, and that’s exactly when Eric grabs Dylan by the wrist and books it.

Once they’re back in the car, Eric ignites the engine as fast as humanly possible, which is impressive considering the tremor in his hands. It’s a miracle he doesn’t crash straight into one of the fuel tanks, a final adieu in a fiery blast.

Dylan pays no attention to the road, pays no attention to Eric, doesn’t care to check if they’re being followed, his brain stuck replaying and rewinding everything that happened in the past few weeks, zeroing in on the mistakes, the close calls - and the complete and utter foolishness of the notion that they could ever have a chance of pulling it off, that all this was anything other than a spectacle of bizarre delusions dreamed up by a man in his death throes, that there ever existed some kind of future that didn’t involve his brain matter splattered all over every flat surface in sight.

They drive for miles and miles until they pull over and let themselves breathe again.

Eric takes Dylan’s hand. It’s clammy and uncomfortable. He mutters hollow, meaningless words, meant to be soothing, perhaps - but the illusion is shattered. Dylan doesn’t have it in him to pick up the pieces and start over.

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A week or two later, they’re sitting in the car, both silent.

Dylan can’t even bring himself to start the engine, and Eric doesn’t insist. He just slumps in his seat a bit more, looks out the window with a frown on his face.

Dylan’s been dreaming a lot lately. more often than not, he finds himself in the past.

There was a time when the world felt smaller, familiar. When his everyday worries consisted of unfinished math homework and asshole jocks and early morning bowling class, hands clean as they grip the ball, no crimson stains in sight.

And there was time when the line was left uncrossed - when Dylan was prepared to shove all the wonderful and terrifying ways being around Eric made him feel into the very depths of his subconscious, to take that secret to the grave.

We should have left it that way, he thinks. I should have never touched Eric.

“Do you regret it?”, Eric asks, as if trying to echo the fated poolside heart-to-heart they’d had a few weeks prior.

The answer comes in an instant. “Yeah, just every fucking day, Reb.”

There's a moment of hesitation on Eric's part - but in the end, he lets it drop. He pushes his sunglasses up towards the bridge of his nose, shifts his expression into something more fitting of the violent criminal he is - and with that, he’s unreadable once more.

Neither speaks a word until they’re past state borders.

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Dylan stares at the ceiling, sick and overheated and completely, utterly drunk.

He doesn't remember why he’s in this state, half-naked and strewn across the floor, barely remembers where he is, hell - barely remembers *who* he is anymore - but he knows Eric is there, too.

He’s rambling about something, though Dylan can’t make out a single sentence. He doesn’t really care, either. It's the sound alone that grounds him. it stops the spinning.

Eventually, Eric starts struggling to get the words out, slurs them together until it’s all just a jumbled mess of consonants expelled at random and he has no choice but to stop. Then he goes quiet, mouth open, eyes wide and unfocused.

Dylan stares at his best friend’s sharp profile, only made more angular in the harsh lighting. Suddenly, he’s overwhelmed with the need to reach out and touch him, to lean down and put his mouth on that spot on his neck where he likes to be kissed, to wrap him in a tight embrace and refuse to let go, or to simply take his hand, do something, anything.

He doesn’t. He thinks about it, though - and soon enough it devolves into fantasies of a world in which things are different, visions of growing up over college textbooks and shitty house parties and vague existential dread of the everyday kind, their story more fitting for some mediocre coming of age flick than the 24 hour news cycle.

He believes it for a moment, even, and he tells Eric as much - whispers that this is all a dream, some drug-induced hallucination, that come morning they’ll wake up horribly hungover but utterly relieved in some nondescript dorm. That they could still make it happen, not now, maybe, but someday, somehow-

Eric turns to him, expression somewhere between hopelessly sad and legitimately angry.

“There’s no world where this is okay”, he spits, voice going just an octave higher on the last syllable. Dylan doesn’t know if he’s talking about the murder or the other thing, but deep down, he agrees either way.

Feeling defeated, he rolls over and falls into a drunken, dreamless sleep.

Eric quietly settles behind him, settles in the periphery of Dylan's consciousness. They might not know how to talk to each other anymore - but this. This is the second best thing.

-

Neither remembers how it started. Something trivial, something avoidable, Dylan assumes - but he's not quite sure. Eric's on edge, lately, the smallest inconvenience enough to send him into a fit of rage.

It's not often that it comes to this, though, a full blown fight, Eric yelling, red in the face, voice cracking on certain parts. He really is trying his best to get some point across, it seems, agitated as he is - but Dylan can't understand the words, can't make out a single coherent sentence, can't even stand to look at the other boy's face. All he wants is to get out.

Eric gets all up in Dylan's personal space before he can make a run for it, though, shoves him backwards, just like he did *that* night. And Dylan knows he's stronger, physically, even emaciated as he is, he could fight back, or grab Eric and bring him down as well - but he's been caught unguarded, unprepared and really, *really* fucking tired.

He ends up on the hardwood floor, with Eric cornering him in, cutting off all escape routes.

"What the fuck, Dylan?" Eric spits, voice shaky, and Dylan feels forced to pay attention. "There was an agreement, V, no unnecessary fucking risks" - a pause, a shallow breath or two - "What if somebody saw you, called the cops, what the fuck then? What the fuck would I have done?"

Huh. So that's what it's about.

Dylan might have taken a lonesome trip to the liquor store in plain daylight, and he might have liberated a bottle or two - but he didn't think Eric would ever find out. And it was a necessity. He's had a shit day. A shit week. A shit life. The alternative would be blowing his brains out.

Dylan stays silent, defiant. Eric just stands there, panting, eyes glassy but jaw clenched tight, fists flexing like he's about to punch Dylan square across the face, and the sight is somehow both absolutely terrifying and thoroughly pathetic.

For what is perhaps the first time, Dylan imagines, no, *feels* what it must have been like for the kids that day. And then it's freefall, the guilt expanding, spilling in every direction, threatening to rip Dylan apart from the inside out, break his ribcage into pieces and drive them straight through his heart until he's nothing but a bloody lump of flesh and bones and remorse.

In the end, it's not the icy stare full of empty threats that finally does it.

Dylan doesn't realize he's crying until he finds himself with his arms full of Eric - Eric, holding onto his shirt like a lifeline, body wracked with the most painful sobs he's ever heard in his life.

They stay tangled up in each other for what feels like hours, days, until their eyes are raw and completely dry. Until Dylan moves them around so that they're both laying on the hardwood floor, side by side, face to face, two interlocking parts of some horribly fucked up jigsaw puzzle.

Dylan traces his thumb along Eric's jawline, along his bottom lip, wordlessly asks for permission. Eric stays silent - but he winds an arm around Dylan's neck to pull him closer, bring him down - and then it turns into kissing, into blindly grasping at each other's clothes, into Eric flat on his back with Dylan above him, all over him, face buried in the crook of his neck as he bottoms out.

Eric bites his wrist when he comes, careful not to make any sound, and Dylan realizes there are things about Eric he will never fully understand.

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September rolls around, and so does Dylan's 18th birthday. He doesn't register that, though, too

busy getting blackout drunk before noon and spending the rest of the day in an alcoholic daze. Eric seems to be missing, so he stumbles around dingy motel room No. 3728432 alone and pathetic, then passes out cold sprawled across one of the still unmade beds, all loose long limbs, six feet and four inches of misery.

When he wakes, it's completely dark out, and Eric is back - cross-legged on the other bed, eyes glued to the tiny television set. He looks both childlike and ten years older than he is.

Dylan gets up and tries his best to stay still as the world steadies itself around him. He expects a snarky comment from Eric, pity, even - but it takes one glance at his companion's worn out face, hollow cheeks and deep, dark circles under his eyes to know that he's not much better off.

"Come here", says Eric.

Dylan does. He flops onto the opposite bed and leans his entire body against Eric, wraps an arm around his waist, too out of it to wonder whether this would be one of the times when the other boy will push him away.

Dylan's relieved when Eric leans against him, too, rests his chin atop his shoulder.

"Happy birthday", he whispers against Dylan's collarbone, barely loud enough to hear. Then he's leaning back a little, digging through the front pocket of his worn out BDUs, and Dylan feels something cold and metallic being shoved into his hand. He mentally berates himself for the way his mind wanders off for a split second, rings and promises and the like - but then he looks down and sees a silver zippo lighter, a V crudely carved onto one side, an R on the other. it's just like the one he had lost months ago, somewhere in the initial chaos.

"I know it's not much", Eric starts, suddenly all timid, "But I just couldn't stand you stealing mine all the time, so. Here. Hope it's *adequate*."

He's trying to play it off as a joke, but the tone of his voice betrays him. Dylan can tell. So he wraps his other arm around Eric, too, and smiles when he relaxes in his embrace.

"Thanks, Reb", he whispers. "Thank you".

They stay like that for a very long time, until all that's left on the TV screen is the midnight sign off message, complete silence.

Dylan languidly strokes Eric's hair, messy, longer than it ever was. The word *fate* crosses his mind, just once.

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Eventually, Dylan sobers up.

It's fair, he thinks as the round enters the chamber. Poetic. Something out of a novel, one last good day kind of deal.

He couldn't have done it while they were still on bad terms, couldn't ever leave Eric thinking it's on him, that he's at fault somehow, but this - this would be fair. Noble. He'd expressed his gratitude. Left a decent memory at the very end, even. No hard feelings.

Eric stirs in his sleep.

It's easier than he thought, going through the motions. The barrel feels cold where it touches his

temple.

He's always imagined it as some kind of perfectly planned ritualistic act - that he would go out thinking of nothing but the legacy he'd leave, a persona larger than life for people to pick apart but never quite comprehend - but it's nothing like that. It's white noise. It's TV static. It's just another day.

Dylan pulls the trigger, and he expects a sound and then his life flashing before his eyes and then a graceful fade to black.

When he opens his eyes, it's the same old dilapidated hellhole, none of the carpet stains resembling anything close to pieces of his brain, and for a single terrifying moment he thinks that this must have been hell all along.

But then he remembers, and- of course. It's just his fucking luck that the piece of shit would jam.

In his adrenaline-addled brain, Dylan considers his options, somewhere between willing to accept this as a sign to hang on for a while longer and determined to do it right, ever the perfectionist - but before the scale tips either way, the magazine detaches and falls to the floor with a dull thud.

Eric sits up on his bed, half awake and visibly pissed off, *shut the fuck up, Dylan* - and that's the end of it.

-

Eric puts out the interior light as he climbs over the gear shift and into Dylan's lap.

"Don't you fucking dare leave me", he hisses as he bites down on the other boy's earlobe, hard enough to make it hurt, not hard enough to break the skin, "Don't even think about it. Don't you ever fucking dare".

His intention was to warn, threaten, perhaps - but it comes out all wrong. High-strung and shaky. Desperate. Dylan sees through it in a second, twists out of Eric's weak grasp and shoves at his bony shoulders so that he can look at him, grabs Eric's face in both hands so that he *will* look at him. Eric doesn't protest.

There's so much Dylan wants to do, kiss Eric, punch him, embrace him, snap his fucking neck - so he settles on tracing his fingers across Eric's high cheekbones, across his sharp jawline, across all the freckles, all the scars, all the proof that he was alive and human for eighteen long years before he became whatever monster they've painted him as.

Dylan looks, and sees the battle going on inside Eric's head. He sees the urge to flee, the urge to turn this into a half-hearted joke and stop speaking to Dylan again, to trap himself inside his head once more. He recognizes it by the twitch of his mouth, by the way his restless hands twist into the fabric of Dylan's shirt - he's scared. That's what it is.

There's a part of Dylan that wants to twist the knife deeper, to watch Eric's face contort in terror as he reaches for his shotgun and ends this farce once and for all. Instead, he pulls Eric closer, presses his lips against the soft part of his neck.

"I wouldn't, Reb", he whispers. It rings hollow and insincere.

He tries again, louder this time, but it's like pulling teeth. It's just as empty. And it's not true.

"I'd kill you, and then myself", he finally chokes out, a compromise, and- it's not exactly peak

romance, no, it's something that would warrant a restraining order from any other normal person in the world - but for them, it's fitting. It's over the top and melodramatic and a little bit silly - but it's honest, for once.

Eric could cry.

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Dylan Klebold looks like the spitting image of Mickey Knox as he drags his knife across Eric's palm and takes it into his own.

It's both utterly ridiculous and absolutely exhilarating. Dylan's heart threatens to beat out of his chest as their blood drips down onto the concrete, getting lost against the scenery below.

There's no river and no music and no wide-angle camera shot, and Eric Harris doesn't make a very convincing bride, anyway - but none of that matters. They're already bound for life, names forever joined across the pages of history in an union that transcends all superficiality, transcends two pieces of metal and a courthouse.

Dylan takes off one of his rings, the one he's been wearing since high school, and slips it on Eric's right hand. He doesn't even flinch at the sight of Eric's blood smeared everywhere, all over his fingers, all over his clothes.

The ring fits perfectly. This, too, is fate.

Eric keeps his eyes trained on Dylan the whole time - gaze steady, unyielding, unbearably intense. As if Dylan's the only thing that's worthy of his full attention. As if Dylan's the center of the universe, as if every other part of his mind arranged itself around that one single thought.

The mid-October sunlight dances off Eric's irises, and Dylan knows he's struck gold.

-

"I can't believe we're doing this", Eric says, whole face lit up with the biggest smile Dylan has seen on him in ages. "'Cause we're still doing this, right, V? It's not one of your fucked up jokes or something?"

Dylan doesn't answer, he doesn't have to. He reaches towards the glove compartment, finds the two unassuming slips of paper, and pushes them into Eric's hands. *See for yourself. I'm serious about this, I'm serious about you.*

Eric runs his finger across the printed letters, impossibly gentle, as if they could dissolve if he's not careful. Then, he turns to look Dylan in the eyes, and all Dylan can see is complete trust, endless devotion.

He leans forward, stoops down (the way he's done a hundred times before, the way he will do as long as he lives) and kisses Eric until they're both breathless. And then he drives.

-

It's over.

Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold stumble into the library, and they know it's over.

The fire alarm blares on as they wander through the carnage. Neither speaks. Neither remembers

why they wanted to do it in the first place.

Eric leans against the bookshelf.

Dylan lights the final molotov, sets it on the desk to sizzle and smolder then break and spill over, an anticlimactic display not unlike everything that came before.

That's the end of the story. There's no other way this story ends.

Two gunshots, moments apart. And then, silence. We know how it goes.

Dylan's head lands on Eric's knee, and that's the last time they ever touch.

End Notes

I tried to keep the ending ambiguous as to whether the grand escape really did happen in a parallel universe vs all of that being Dylan's brain conjuring up an elaborate fantasy in his death throes. Probably the latter given how unrealistic it is.

P. S. Please be nice, this is like my first fic ever

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